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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this manual is to assist parents in developing better home-school relationships. The ten chapters deal with various aspects of those relationships, including the following: (1) the need for parents and teachers to work together, (2) productive parent-teacher conferences, (3) parent and teacher expectations of each other, (4) the importance of communication, (5) parents as paraprofessionals and as initiators of home-school relations, (6) children's academic and behavioral problems, and (7) protecting overorganized children. (AEA)

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Teacher and parent must work in harmony — each has a special contribution to make to the child's growth and development.

Parents-School: A Good Relationship

Instructional Guide for Parents

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Division of Reading Effectiveness
Indiana Department of Public Instruction
Harold H. Negley, Superintendent
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Superintendent's Message

Parents - School: A Good Relationship

Parent involvement and awareness of how to assist their own children with reading/learning at home is becoming increasingly important. The expanded curriculum and diversity of student experiences, coupled with demands for accountability, sharpen the need for parent participation in attaining comprehensive educational goals.

This manual is to assist parents in developing better home-school relationships. Education must be a partnership of the school and parents to promote the best possible learning situations for children. For this educational partnership to succeed, both parent and school must communicate and actively plan together. Through shared planning, the instruction at school and at home can better meet the needs of each child of each parent living within a given community.

A goal of your State Superintendent of Public Instruction is to bring about active participation of all Indiana citizens in attaining the educational goals identified by state and local communities. To get involved with what is happening in schools, to promote quality education for our children and to actively support educational endeavors is a thrust that must be realized to insure the "best" learning environments for the children of Indiana.

Harold H. Negley

PARENTS-SCHOOL: A GOOD RELATIONSHIP

Chapter — Page No.

I. EFFECTIVE HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONS
- A. Children as the Beneficiaries 7
- B. Understanding the Parallel Responsibility of Parents and Teachers Working Together 7

II. PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES
- A. What You Should Want to Know About Your Child and School 9
- B. What Teachers Will Want to Know About Your Child 10
- C. You, Too, Can Know the Teacher's Language 10
- D. What Has Been Gained From Parent-Teacher Conferences? 11

III. WHAT PARENTS AND TEACHERS MIGHT EXPECT FROM THE PARTNERSHIP
- A. What Parents May Expect From The Teacher 13
- B. What The Teacher May Expect From Parents 13

IV. KNOW YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER
- A. Open Communication 17
- B. How Communicating Helps You and Your Child 17

V. HOW PARENTS CAN HELP THE SCHOOLS AS PARAPROFESSIONALS
- A. Responsibilities of Paraprofessionals 21
- B. Suggestions for Becoming A More Successful Aide 21

VI. PARENTS: YOU TAKE THE INITIATIVE
- A. School-Community Relations 23
- B. Parents in Group Activity 23
- C. Community Resources 23

VII. IF YOUR CHILD HAS DIFFICULTY
- A. How to Help Your Child With His Difficulties 25
- B. Why Some Parents Overreact 25
- C. Children's Academic Difficulties 25
  - 1. Some Causes for Children Being Below Grade Level 26
  - 2. A Word to the Wise Parent 26
- D. Children's Behavioral Difficulties 27
  - 1. The School's Standard of Pupil Behavior 27
  - 2. What Can Parents Do? What Should Parents *Not* Do? 29

VIII. OVERORGANIZED CHILDREN
- A. Overorganization and Success in School 31
- B. How Parents Can Control Their Children's Extra Activities 32

IX. KEEP UP YOUR COURAGE! 33

X. INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: ITS ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY 35

I. Effective Home-School Relations

Schools today have taken positive steps to involve parents more deeply in an educational partnership. Long ago there was no such "partnership," for home and school were one. Mothers and fathers, the older children, uncles, aunts and grandparents — all were the teachers. The curriculum was the life of the family and the life of the community.

Today, that natural unity is gone. The result is that parents and teachers have had to create a way to link homes and schools and continue their partnership in education. That process is known as *home-school relations*. It is a modern invention to achieve a unity for children which once existed naturally.

When parents and teachers are able to communicate with one another, realizing that each has the welfare of the child in mind, the child can been seen as a whole person, not segmented between school and home.

The field of home-school relations aims to bring about a common understanding of what children are like: how they grow, how they behave, the problems children face and how to help children. More specifically, home-school relations aims to bring about between teachers and parents a common understanding of good education: how it operates, what it requires, what it avoids and what it strives to accomplish.

Children as the Beneficiaries

When teachers and parents work together as a team, children gain in many ways:

1. Schools get more support. They begin to move toward the full backing that schools today need so desperately.
2. Children have more consistent guidance, in school and out. They are not pulled in competing directions, with each new yank-and-haul diluting all the previous efforts.
3. Children's learning is constantly reinforced, wherever they turn. In school and out, over and over, their understanding is strengthened.
4. There is less danger of gaps in children's total education which can so easily occur when homes and schools do not know what the other is and is not doing.

Close relationships between homes and schools can lead to richer, fuller, more nourishing lives for children. These close ties can mean that children have the chance to live up to their potential.

Understanding the Parallel Responsibility of Parents and Teachers Working Together

In understanding the individual child — his needs and his problems — the teacher and parent should meet and share their knowledge of the child whenever possible. The parent must help the teacher to see the youngster as he is in his family and neighborhood group. The teacher must bring to the parent her insight into the child's capacity to learn in the classroom and to live and work with others in the school environment. Teacher and parent must work in harmony — each one has the welfare of the child in mind, and each has a special contribution to make to the child's growth and development.

The parent is responsible for providing the emotional support and individual guidance his child will need as he is growing up. His concern for the child is and should be deep and personal. The bonds of affection must be strong if the child is to feel the security of belonging to his family group. This is essential if he is to become an emotionally healthy adult.

The teacher, too, feels deep concern for the individual child, but his or her responsibility is in two directions. A teacher's primary responsibility is to teach. Teachers must see that each child is equipped, insofar as possible, with the skills and knowledge that will enable him to meet his responsibilities as an adult in a complex world. In working toward this end, teachers must pay attention not only to what is to be learned but also to the learners as individuals. Only as a teacher understands and recognizes that a child's emotional needs must be met if the child is to learn effectively will he/she be able to fulfill the role as teacher.

When parents and teachers are able to communicate with one another, realizing that each has the welfare of the child in mind, the child can be seen as a whole person, not segmented between school and home. His experiences can be brought together and seen in perspective so that parents and teachers, planning together, can help him to develop his capacities as fully as possible.

I. Summary

Days have long since passed when home and school were one and the family taught the child all he needed to know. Now that society has assigned major educational responsibilities to the schools, teachers and parents need to build bridges of understanding and communication for the good of children. Bridges enable travelers to cross in both directions, thus, enabling home and school to learn from each other. It is imperative that the home-school relationship build upon a shared concern for the educational progress of the child.

There are dividends to be derived from this three-way communication. Among other things, the child sees himself as an important human being whose opinions, feelings and interests are valued; one who participates in decisions affecting his immediate future; one whose parents and teacher genuinely care. The parent finds himself teamed with his child rather than alienated from him. He feels important to his child's education, success and happiness. He feels important to his child. And the teacher also profits, for the teacher finds the parent and child understanding and supportive teammates, thus assuring maximum returns for all concerned.

Parents have much to give the school. Their knowledge of the child is often invaluable in providing the teacher with insight and consequent direction. Past history, family structure, parental expectations, sibling personalities, aptitudes and abilities are vital factors in the totality of a child that are helpful pieces of information to the school.

Conversely, the parent seeks from the teacher information for which he has no other source — a reliable picture of the child as he comes to grips with the academic expectations of the school and as he functions in a scholastic setting among his peers.

II. Parent-Teacher Conferences

Many problems would never develop if, through the years, parents met with teachers to discuss the needs and characteristics of their children. Through such meetings parents can learn about the classroom program which has been planned or is being developed. The teacher can gain valuable insights into the child's relationships with his parents and his home conditions. The key is the teacher's and parents' willingness to talk and to listen to one another, in order to seek and understand more fully the reasons behind the child's behavior. This understanding, coupled with the teacher's professional training, and her understanding of the learning process and child psychology, will lead to better classroom programs that focus on individual needs.

A parent-teacher conference is a two-way exchange of information about a child. In some communities, it is the sole means of reporting to parents. In others, it supplements a report card. Because it can do so much more than a report card alone, it is becoming a part of more and more school programs. Where the technique has been used well, it has almost always been well received.

Usually, with one or two successful teacher-parent conferences behind them, parents return eagerly and happily for more. They like the feeling of playing a deeper role in their child's education and training. And their child likes the idea, too. A child likes to feel that his teacher and his parents are teamed together "for" him rather than working at cross-purposes. And the teacher knows that time spent conferring is really time saved, because it helps to eliminate many problems in the classroom.

As a matter of fact, the whole school system benefits from effective teacher-parent conferences. Both teacher and parents will feel more comfortable when both realize how much they have in common.

— Both want children to succeed.
— Both want children to progress at the rate best for them.
— Both want children to feel that the standards at home and at school complement each other.
— Both believe that learning takes place at school and at home.

In short, both you and your child's teacher are aiming for the same goal — the best possible education for the child. If getting together to talk things over will help reach that goal, it's certainly worth it.

A child likes to feel that his teacher and his parents are teamed together "for" him rather than working at cross-purposes.

What You Should Want to Know About Your Child and School

You, like most parents, are full of curiosity. You want to know what your child is being taught at school and how your child is taught. Things have changed since most parents were in school, but most parents aren't quite sure exactly *what* has changed. Teachers are usually most anxious to show you that the changes are for the better. Here are some basic education questions you might want to ask your child's teacher:

1. What will my child study?
2. What tests are used?
3. What do you do to help the child who learns faster or slower than the rest of the class?
4. What good are field trips?
5. What are "social studies"?
6. When do you start teaching science?
7. How do you teach reading?
8. What will my child be learning this year in math?
9. Why is more than one text on the same subject used in your class?
10. When are children taught in groups rather than as an entire class?
11. How do you teach spelling?
12. Will you assign homework?
13. What kind of schedule does my child have in school?
14. What about the discipline of students?
15. What time does school start?
16. What is an IQ?

Here are some questions *specifically pertaining to your child* that you might want to ask your child's teacher:

1. Is my child doing as well as he should in school?
2. What group is he in and why?
3. What kind of books is he using?
4. May I see some of his work?

5. Does he get along well with the other children?
6. Have you noticed any special interests, aptitudes or abilities in my child?
7. Does he respect your authority?
8. Have you noticed any signs of initiative, originality or responsibility in the classroom?
9. Does he respect the rights and property of others?
10. How is he getting along in individual subjects?
11. How can I help him at home?

What Teachers Will Want to Know About Your Child

Parents can usually expect the following types of questions from teachers regarding each child:

1. What is the child's reaction to school? Is there something he especially likes or dislikes? Does he feel able to do the work at school?
2. How is the child's health? What recent illness, disability or accident has he had? Are there any problems concerning sleep, bad dreams, awakening early?
3. How is the child's emotional adjustment? Are there any "little things" troubling him? Under what conditions does he seem worried or fearful? Does his self-confidence need bolstering? How does he react to not getting what he wants?
4. How does the child spend his time out of school?
5. What hobbies, special interests and abilities has the child shown at home?
6. What is the child's response to rules and regulations in the home?
7. What discipline works best with the child at home?
8. Does he have any home responsibilities?
9. Does he have a suitable place to read or work?

You, Too, Can Know the Teacher's Language

Teachers, like most professionals, have developed their own special language. Here are a few definitions that will help you.

1. Reading readiness: When a child is mentally and physically ready to read. Indications of readiness are good vocabulary, ability to speak in complete sentences, ability to tell a story.
2. Phonics: A method of teaching reading by breaking words into speech sounds. The child pronounces words by learning letter combinations which represent sounds.
3. Enrichment: Offering talented students something beyond what is prescribed for the average student; designed to hold their interest.
4. Acceleration: Moving ahead in a course faster than usual.
5. Gifted child: A child with much better than average ability.
6. IQ: Intelligence quotient is one measurement of learning ability. When the IQ is 100, it is considered to be average development in comparison with other youngsters.
7. Extracurricular activities: Also called cocurricular. Activities not carried on in the regular class but which are learning experiences.
8. Retention: Remembering.
9. Instructional materials center: Indicates a broadening of the use and resources of libraries. They now are more than places for books. A center might also include sound tapes, videotapes, slides, films, and in some school districts, computerized retrieval systems linked to a central materials center.
10. Individualized instruction: Instruction based on a student's identified needs. Planning and carrying out the student's program of studies is initiated through a flexible system of multiple instructional techniques and materials. The student's progress is based on his meeting and/or exceeding those identified learning needs.
11. Compensatory education: Program designed to help disadvantaged students increase skills and background experiences for learning.
12. Team teaching: Two or more teachers in a classroom instead of one. Instruction in a subject area is prepared and presented by two or more teachers interacting with one another and the students. Students gain from expertise of more than one instructor. Teachers' expertise complements one another.

What Has Been Gained From Parent-Teacher Conferences?

Much is gained from parent-teacher conferences that may help in the long run to avoid some common teacher-parent-pupil misunderstandings. Such conferences are good, for then parents have:

1. Met their child's teacher and established a friendly relationship with the teacher.
2. Learned a little about how the teacher teaches, his objectives and standards.
3. Learned what is expected of their child.
4. Learned what they can do to help their child.
5. Seen the atmosphere and environment in which their child spends so much time.
6. Gained a better understanding of what their child is talking about when he speaks of school.
7. Learned about the grading system.
8. Learned about the discipline policies.
9. Learned pertinent school rules and procedures their child is expected to follow.

II. Summary

Parent-teacher conferences are one of the most positive means of building good home-school relationships.

Why Parent-Teacher Conferences?

1. It is a way in which the home and school share information about the child.
2. It furnishes specific information regarding his academic achievement.
3. It helps the child understand his strengths and weaknesses.
4. It gives direction to teacher-parent pupil planning for future growth.

What Purpose Does the Parent-Teacher Conference Serve?

For the Child

It helps the child to be more specifically aware of his own progress and needs.

For the Parent

1. It provides an opportunity to become acquainted with the teacher and the school.
2. It enables parents to gain a better understanding of their own child through shared information.
3. It serves as a basis for planning with the teacher for the child's continued growth.

For the Teacher

1. It supplements the teacher's information of the home and family background of the child.
2. It enables her to gain a better understanding of the child through shared information.
3. It allows for intensive discussion of pertinent problems.
4. It serves as a basis for making plans to meet the child's needs.
5. It helps the teacher to guide the child in evaluating his own progress in terms of his strengths, weaknesses and future plans.

The parent seeks and should receive increased insight into teaching methods and techniques. When the child is not progressing satisfactorily, the parent is entitled to immediate full discussion and specific guidance about the role he may constructively play in strengthening areas of weakness.

III. What Parents and Teachers Might Expect From the Partnership

Most teachers want to meet and know parents and will make some gestures toward this end. Parents should be very active in the establishment of mutually satisfactory parent-teacher relationships and in developing and using easily traveled avenues of communication. It is essential that parents seek information about their child from the teacher.

To be sure, teachers will automatically and periodically issue report cards or schedule parent conferences to give you information about your child's progress. But you may need and want more information than this — information or teacher help and advice about library reading or the purchase of a reference book, the advisability of summer school or of sending the child to camp. By knowing the teacher, this information is more readily and easily secured.

The relationship which usually exists between parents and the kindergarten teacher approaches the ideal.

Do not, therefore, depend only on the occasional and often sparse information which comes from the school, but build a relationship with the teacher which will provide you a running account of your child's school life. The relationship which usually exists between parents and the kindergarten teacher approaches the ideal. During this first year of their child's school attendance, parents are intensely interested in the program and activities, in the physical welfare of the child, in the child's adjustment to school and in knowing the teacher very well. Regrettably, this enthusiasm and the close relationship with the teacher wanes as the child moves through the school. How much richer the child would be if only that original togetherness of parent and teacher would continue throughout the child's schooling.

Get acquainted with your child's teacher early in the school year so the fruits of parent-teacher cooperative action can be enjoyed all year long by the child.

You and your child's teacher are engaged in a challenging and serious enterprise, the education of your child. Your partnership in this endeavor will bring better results when each of you understands clearly what can be expected from the other and when these expectations are harmoniously acted upon.

What Parents May Expect From the Teacher

A teacher should:

1. Demonstrate a keen and abiding interest in each child.
2. Treat all children with respect, compassion and understanding.
3. Be objective in his approach to children's learning and problems.
4. Alert the parent immediately when there is difficulty — academic, social, emotional or healthwise.
5. Hold children to challenging, reachable standards of achievement and conduct, adjusting such standards and expectations to harmonize with each child's individual capacities, needs and potential as the teacher is able to determine them.
6. Always be fair — and firm.
7. Welcome parent visitations to the classroom, in conference and in all communicative situations.
8. Be honest and frank when discussing the child's school work and school behavior, hiding nothing, evading nothing and omitting nothing that parents are entitled to know.
9. Be understanding of the problems and difficulties of parenting. The teacher should not be critical or form negative judgments when he does not know the parents' side of a situation.
10. Hold in confidence all information which he acquires from the parents.
11. Always be friendly and courteous to parents, putting them at ease when they come to the school and to the classroom, remembering that the parents are the guests.

What the Teacher May Expect From Parents

Parents should:

1. Be friendly, courteous and understanding.
2. Offer their unreserved cooperation. When the teacher needs or calls you, respond.

3. Be honest, sincere and forthright when discussing the child. Do not hold back information which would provide the teacher with newer and better insights for teaching and guiding your child. Some of this information will be personal, but the teacher, being a professional, should hold such information in confidence. Examples of such information are hardship situations in the home — illness of a family member, father losing his job, brother-sister rivalry, broken home. Such situations have a strong effect on the child's school work. Knowing of these difficulties, a teacher can give support to the child, tailor her expectancies and provide special help which will keep the child going in the school setting.
4. Make no unreasonable demands upon the teacher, remembering that she has a roomful of children to teach and care for.
5. Do not compare one teacher with another or expect that each teacher will direct children or teach the same as others.
6. Go directly to the teacher when there is dissatisfaction or question, rather than discussing such matters with friends or relatives. Parents and the appropriate school personnel should resolve the matter in private. Your children will respect you for respecting them.
7. Refrain from criticizing the teacher or speaking disparagingly of her in front of your child. Speak positively whenever possible.
8. Do not accept as 100 per cent truth all the child says about the teacher; children sometimes overstate incidents or honestly misunderstand.
9. Welcome the teacher into your home, either by invitation or if he asks to call. Such visits decidedly help the teacher help children, for seeing them in the home setting and getting better acquainted with the parents provides valuable insights.

III. Summary

Education is a responsibility shared by the school, the teacher and the parents. Each has a right to participate, and home-school cooperation is essential to the fullest development of the educative process.

Understanding home-school cooperation can result in a clearer understanding of what desirable education is. It can and does lead to a greater appreciation of the mutual contributions of parents and teachers to that education. Parents find in such cooperation many opportunities for increasing their knowledge about child development and the role that families working together can play in assuring better education not only for their own children but for all children.

Teachers, too, gain personal satisfaction, recognition, appreciation and generally more opportunities to teach effectively and to participate more meaningfully in community life. They are likely to achieve better results with children because they learn more about the boys and girls they teach. When families and teachers are really in communication with one another, they reinforce and supplement one another and enrich each other's work.

Children benefit, too. Their adjustment problems are solved in better ways because home and school are working together to find and deal with variables which are causing difficulty. They are freed from tensions which develop when requirements of home and school are in conflict or are not coordinated. In short, they are less confused than they might be otherwise because their two worlds — home and school — tend to become one.

IV. Know Your Child's Teacher

Open Communication

The one person in the school who is more important to your child than anyone else is the teacher. In the educational scheme, he or she is paramount. The specific job of all other personnel is to support the teacher and facilitate his/her work with children.

In general an effective parent-teacher partnership:

1. Enables the home and school to meet the needs of the child most effectively.
2. Establishes a working relationship between the parent and teacher in the interests of the child.
3. Assures a two-way communication between home and school.
4. Provides an opportunity for the teacher to share with the parent the educational program which has been based on growth characteristics and designed to meet the needs of children.
5. Provides an opportunity for parents to understand the role of education in a democratic society.
6. Helps the teacher understand the child's relationship to his parents, brothers and sisters, and other family members.
7. Helps the teacher understand the family's aspirations for the child, his routines, interests, out-of-school activities and the emotional tone of his home.
8. Provides an opportunity for the teacher to share with parents professional knowledge about social and emotional development of children.

Knowing and working harmoniously with the teacher proves to the child that his parents are really interested in him and in his school success.

The importance of the teacher in your child's education and the amount of influence she will have on him cannot be measured. Unfortunately, many parents are better acquainted and more communicative with the barber, the hairdresser and the grocer than they are with their child's teacher. Yet the impact of these persons upon the child is practically nil.

How Communicating Helps You and Your Child

Here are some reasons why it is so very important to your child that you know the teacher and, through her, the educational program and your child's progress in it:

1. You have unique and distinct contributions to make to your child's education through your constant watchfulness over his school progress and experiences, through your help and encouragement, and through supplementation of the teacher's work. *These vital contributions cannot be made by any other person.* Knowing and working with the teacher enhances and facilitates the efforts of teachers in helping children.
2. Knowing and working harmoniously with the teacher proves to the child that his parents are really interested in him and in his school success. In this manner parents are saying to their child, "Education is very important." He knows they are "in his corner." This pleases and motivates him.
3. Regularly talking with the child about his school work — encouraging him to bring home his work, completed and not completed, and praising him and helping him — sharply enhances his school progress. You should avoid shaming him, making light of his work and pressing him beyond reason or expectation.
4. By communicating with the teacher, you know that if your child brings work home — either because he wants to do better or because his teacher requires it — these are your responsibilities:
   a. Have a regular time for him to do his work. Do not jeopardize this important part of his school work with unnecessary or less important activities. Of course, he should not be excused from his normal home responsibilities. Bedtime should be strictly adhered to, for allowing a child to steal from his required sleeping time to do school work may well result in a listless and inattentive pupil in school the next day.
   b. Provide a quiet, comfortable place in which the youngster can do his work.

c. Do not do his work for him. Give him help, perhaps going over his work if he asks you, but insist that he do the work. You should not have to do what the teacher is supposed to do — namely, teach. What the child brings home to do, he should already understand and know how to do. If this is not so, then you should check with the teacher.

5. Conferences between teacher and parents are one of the best ways to help children in school. Teachers can help parents see and know their child better. Report cards just cannot do the job, at least by themselves. Be sure that such conferences are held several times a year.

In all the foregoing suggestions, your child's teacher is involved. By knowing her and working with her in these ways and in many other ways, you are making contributions to your child's education that cannot be made by anyone else.

IV· Summary

The relationship between the teacher and the parents may affect the way in which an individual child learns. When teachers and parents are not working together, the child's progress in school can be seriously hampered.

Here are questions you should ask your child's teacher about your child.

1. Is my child working up to his ability in academic subjects?
2. Is my child on, above or below grade level in academic subjects?
3. What special interests and abilities does my child display in the classroom?
4. What positive work habits is my child developing?
5. How well does my child accept responsibility?
6. How well does my child get along with classmates?
7. What problems or difficulties is my child experiencing?
8. How can I best help my child?

V. How Parents Can Help the Schools as Paraprofessionals

A trend in education that seems certain to increase school involvement opportunities for parents is the greater use of paraprofessionals, including teachers' aides, library aides and clerical aides. Some of the positions are part-time volunteer jobs, others are part-time or full-time paid positions. Some that start as unpaid, part-time volunteer posts soon grow into full-time or part-time paid positions. Educators realize that not all tasks carried out in a school have to be done by certificated personnel and that some duties may in fact be more appropriately accomplished by non-professionals.

The rationale for introduction of more parents into the classroom was that it would bring more individual attention to children who desperately need help. Aides can help free the teacher from his clerical, housekeeping and monitoring "chains" and enable him to *teach* full time.

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Responsibilities of Paraprofessionals

Paraprofessionals perform such functions as the following:

1. Preparing flash cards, charts or other audiovisual materials under teacher direction.
2. Keeping attendance records.
3. Operating audiovisual equipment such as projectors.
4. Reading aloud or listening to children reading.
5. Tutoring individuals or small groups of children on well-defined subjects for which the teacher feels the aide is competent.
6. Scoring objective tests.
7. Monitoring pupil activity during study periods and playground periods.
8. Escorting children on errands outside the classroom but within the school.
9. Accompanying the teacher and class on field trips.

Suggestions for Becoming a More Successful Aide

Parents can be very effective classroom helpers by following these suggestions:

1. Learn the name of pupils immediately (make yourself a seating chart).
2. Learn as much about each pupil as quickly as possible.
3. Lend personal assistance to pupils wherever possible.
4. Consult often with the teacher about how you can help.
5. Give encouragement to pupils wherever and whenever you can.
6. Praise pupil's efforts and successes.
7. Be patient in dealing with pupils.
8. Become familiar with the school building, grounds, personnel.
9. Learn the routine of the school day.
10. Get acquainted immediately with emergency procedures.
11. When not actively involved in the classroom, be a keen observer.
12. Inform teachers with whom you work of any special talents or interests and of special experiences you have had.
13. Assume responsibility — with teachers' permission — for calendars, books, etc.
14. Watch carefully how the teacher deals with and directs pupils.
15. Exchange telephone numbers with the teacher.
16. Get acquainted with other staff members.
17. Be mature in your conduct and demonstrate that you are a responsible person.
18. Ask for clarification when you do not understand an assignment or suggestion.
19. Be on time and leave at an appropriate time.

V. Summary

The involvement of the parent, both physically and emotionally, in the education of his child represents the ultimate in school-home relationships. The first step in creating a cooperative climate is to recognize and act upon the well-established fact that the school and the home need each other. The goals they seek in the lives of children should be mutual goals. If the goals of the home and the school are in conflict, children often become confused and develop anxieties which prevent learning.

Educators who desire more effective school-home cooperation recognize that schools must develop a two-way communication effort. And thus, the use of parent volunteers in classrooms has proven to be of mutual benefit to teachers, parents and children. Teachers profit from the specific knowledge that parents have about their own children; parents profit from the general information that teachers have about many children; and children profit from the understanding gained by both parents and teachers.

Parents should understand the daily functions of the classroom. Then the parent and teacher can work more closely for the educational success of each child.

VI. Parents: You Take the Initiative

School-Community Relations

School-parent and teacher-parent relations are often dependent on initiatory acts by schools or teachers to bring parents in contact with schools. There are, however, several reasons for parents taking the initiative to make initial school-teacher contact.

Teachers have 30 or more students to teach and guide. Try as they may, they cannot give every student all the personal attention desirable. Parents, by taking the initiative, can help the teacher in better understanding each student. As already mentioned, the parent, by initiating communication breakthroughs, can reduce many barriers to learning.

Parents also have a financial investment in the schools. One might say that parents collectively own the school by paying taxes. Besides public schools, parents still contribute a large share of the support for private and parochial schools. What happens in education is reflected in school costs, which directly affect local family financial budgets.

Parents should take the initiative to understand why school costs are necessary, how the costs of education are distributed and what projected school costs are. While it may appear that tax money for school support represents money "paid out", parents must realize that there is an investment feature built into this financial effort. Money spent for education is an investment in America's future.

Because of the two basic principles — parental responsibility for the education of children and parents' financial stake in the schools — it is incumbent upon parents to take the initiative in securing a favorable educational climate for their children. In this way parents play a vital role in bringing the community to the schools.

Parents in Group Activity

Through already existing school-community groups such as PTA's, PTO's and Citizens Advisory Committees, parents can become involved in their schools. Many of these groups have failed, however, to achieve their maximum potential simply because too many parents have neglected to give them needed support. Such groups can be no better than parents want and expect them to be.

Some parents come away from a PTA meeting understandably disappointed and conclude that PTA is not a viable force in building bridges between parents and schools or that PTA can do little to improve the education and welfare of boys and girls. This need not be the case. PTA should mean not only a series of meetings, but discussion groups, special committees, short-term and long-term projects, provision for room mothers and many other avenues along which interested parents can find meaningful ways to become involved with schools and make a contribution to the betterment of their children's education. A PTA unit not providing various means for parents to become involved may be strongly stimulated to new life and action through the efforts of one or two individuals. A few other informed parents who will earnestly want to explore other ways of providing cooperative action among members and potential members may need only a gentle nudge to become active. You must take the initiative for your PTA to be successful.

Community Resources

Parents often note that schools have failed to use the abundance of physical and human resources available in every community. A partial explanation for this is that educators are simply uninformed about their neighborhoods and communities. PTA's and other interested school-community groups can help overcome this problem by offering to help schools prepare an up-to-date community resource file, which, if adequately done, can be used by school personnel in seeking background information about the neighborhood and community, possible places to be visited on field trips, and names of persons who have had and are willing to share unique experiences with school groups.

Schools with small enrollments may have a few people living in the community who have lived or traveled to a foreign country or who have had some singular occupation or adventure to share with children. Elementary school geography classes could profit greatly from access to outside "experts", slides, costumes and other materials so often available from persons within a few blocks of the school.

VI. Summary

There are three essentials for good school-community relationships.

1. Parents and teachers must know and trust each other. The school belongs to the community. In the community-centered school, parents feel free to come and go in the building with a sense of belonging, not intruding. Whether they are there to arrange a conference with a teacher, make a complaint to the principal or view a display of pupils' work, their presence is welcomed as a vital force in the aims of the educational program.
2. Teachers must know the community in which they work. Because the child brings to his teacher a mind and body bearing this imprint of his family, his playground or street, his church and his social agencies, the teacher must be thoroughly versed in the customs of the community if she is to meet the child on common ground. A conscientious teacher does more than help the child develop through the school hours of each day. She visits homes, attends community meetings and confers with representatives of community agencies.
3. There must be many opportunities for parents and other community residents to work in the school. The community-centered school, while urging its teachers to go outside and absorb something of the life of people, also opens wide its doors and draws in the community. Parents take part in school activities, initiate community projects among the students and feel a sense of responsibility for the care of the actual buildings and grounds. The school must belong to all of the children and all of the adults living within its borders.

Parents, you have a right to be informed of what is happening in the schools and a responsibility to be alert to constructive means you may employ in being of service to your schools and your children. Understanding of these roles of teacher and parent — where they are separate and where they merge — is reached through meeting and working together.

VII. If Your Child Has Difficulty

Children's difficulties in school fall generally into four categories — academic, behavioral, emotional and social.

Academic difficulty — trouble in one or several of the formal subjects or with particular aspects of them — seems easier somehow for parents to recognize, work with, remain calm about and accept. In the area of behavioral difficulty, which usually includes social and emotional problems as well, parents aren't always as accepting.

How to Help Your Child With His Difficulties

Whether a child's difficulty is behavioral or academic, or a blend of the two, parents should want to do something about it. They can be most helpful by:

1. Flushing the difficulty out into the open and facing it realistically and honestly
2. Analyzing the difficulty
3. Searching for and identifying the cause
4. Developing a program for eliminating or reducing the difficulty
5. Sincerely, resolutely and faithfully promoting and executing that program — including sufficient follow-up

Parents should do all of the above in cooperation with the child's teacher, principal and other school personnel. Much of the difficulty a child has in school is discovered by the teacher. She will inform the parents of this difficulty and mutually they will work toward a solution. If it is a serious problem and a mutually planned corrective program is inadequate, other persons are brought in — the principal, nurse, remedial teacher, psychologist, guidance department personnel and others. Some very serious cases cannot be solved by any school personnel or in the school setting. In such cases parents must seek outside professional help.

Many parents do not readily or easily accept that their child is having difficulty in school, and behavioral difficulty is hardest of all for them to accept and work with.

In general, the manner in which difficulties of children are or should be handled is with a high degree of home-school cooperative action. But this isn't the way it always happens. Many parents do not easily accept that their child is having difficulty in school and, as stated before, behavioral difficulty is hardest of all for them to accept and work with.

Why Some Parents Overreact

Many parents react negatively and defensively to information from the school that their child is having difficulty or is in trouble. Here are some reasons why parents may react in this manner:

1. Parents interpret the identification and announcement of a child's difficulty by a school person as some kind of indictment against them. So they become defensive. Because they look upon all that the child does as a reflection of themselves, a child in difficulty seems to point toward parental mistake or inadequacy.
2. They may have been negligent, in fact, in some phase of their responsibility in supporting the child in his school life. Thus they feel threatened or accused.
3. They misinterpret the school's motives and reasons for revealing the difficulty.
4. Their hopes and expectations for their child are crushed. They quickly conclude the child is a failure, or that he is headed for a juvenile detention home.
5. They, themselves, may have had an unhappy school experience and do not feel warmly toward school or teachers. Now their child's difficulty stirs up unpleasant memories.

Let us now look specifically at two major areas of children's school difficulties, *academic* and *behavioral,* recognizing that they are not always mutually exclusive. Any one (academic, behavioral, social, emotional) may combine with any other, or all others, to cause difficulty. For example, a pupil's academic problems may be caused by emotional difficulty.

Children's Academic Difficulties

Generally speaking, we think of a child having academic difficulty when he is not progressing at the appropriate grade level. Let's say he is starting fifth grade, but in arithmetic his progress has reached only fourth-grade

level. Or, putting it another way, when the school year ends he has not completed successfully what is expected for promotion to sixth grade. He is "below grade level."

As he begins to fall behind the progress being made by the class in any subject, he is thought to be having academic difficulty.

We are beginning to see that it is neither right nor fair to expect all children to learn a specified body of knowledge, skills and concepts in the same number of months or years.

Some Causes for Children Being Below Grade Level

Following are some of the reasons children fall behind or have academic difficulties, some of which are not their fault.

1. The timing of learning is too fast. Children learn at different rates, some rapidly, some slowly. Some highly intelligent children learn some things slowly, for example. We are beginning to see that it is neither right nor fair to expect all children to learn a specified body of knowledge, skills and concepts in the same number of months or years. Some need less time than one year to "consume", say, a fifth-grade program of education.
2. Native ability is a prime factor in learning. Some children are limited mentally which causes them to fall behind as the learning assignment goes beyond their mental power to conquer it. Learning in school should be tailored to each child's capacity to learn. Lack of ability, then, is a cause of children's academic difficulty.
3. Closely associated with the foregoing is overexpectancy — expecting a child to accomplish or achieve above his capacity. Even a highly intelligent child cannot be expected to achieve normally if, for example, he has a social, emotional or physical problem. Pressure should never be put on a child until it is first determined whether the child needs or can take pressure.
4. A poor attitude toward learning or toward school is the cause of some children's academic difficulties — a negative attitude including a lack of motivation or desire to learn.
5. Poor study habits often result in children having learning problems.
6. Obviously, being regularly absent from school plays havoc with children's academic progress. Some absences cannot be avoided, but parents should make sure that, when at all possible, their child attends school regularly.

A Word to the Wise Parent

Parents of slow-learning children need to counsel themselves as well as their offspring. They should accept the situation that evidently prevails, respect the school's evaluation and analysis, and proceed with calm and wisdom. There is no doubt that parents feel badly when they learn their child is having difficulty. But feeling badly doesn't help children with their academic problems. A few further suggestions and thoughts may help parents approach such situations:

1. Parents should learn to live at peace with the facts of a child's insoluble academic difficulties — if such should ever be the case. They should not make things worse by constantly displaying to the child their disappointment, hurt or even anger resulting from his inability to achieve satisfactorily.
2. Constantly parading models of academic successes before the child (Daddy, Aunt Emma, the brother who gets all A's, etc.) will only drive a struggling child deeper into the pit of despair. If a child is doing his best, he should receive just as much praise, credit and encouragement as the academic star of the family, and perhaps more.
3. Believe that the cause of a child's difficulty is rarely poor teaching. Some parents will immediately blame the teacher for their child's slow learning ability. Such parents, wanting to believe this, do not recognize the fact that other children, having this same "poor" teacher, are learning very well.
4. For some children who have serious academic difficulty, the school may not have a solution or answer. In such cases, the school attempts to refer parents to persons outside the school

whose professional training in this area is far more extensive than that of the classroom teacher.

5. Do not jump to conclusions, or believe you can analyze or determine the cause of your child's difficulty yourself.
6. Don't determine early in your child's life that:
   — she's going to go to college, or
   — he's going to be a physician like his uncle.

   Some parents have unwaveringly decided the future academic paths their children will follow and keep reminding them and the school: "He's just got to do well in school. He must go to college." Often, this becomes tragic, for such a child may possess only average intelligence; or his degree of intelligence does not warrant medical or law school. His life becomes a parent-sponsored nightmare.
7. Your child's teacher cannot possibly notify you of every difficulty your child may encounter, though it is hoped she will contact you about major trouble. A reminder: A teacher has an average of 30 children and teaches eight subjects. There are 240 daily possibilities for child difficulties — in one week, 1,200 possibilities. This should say to parents: "You be the initiator — you ask or visit the teacher if you want to make sure things are going along well."
8. Don't ascribe too much validity to your child's evaluation of how he is doing in school. He may not really know, or he may purposely mislead you to keep you from knowing the real truth.
9. Neighborhood squabbles and feuds carry over into the school and often cause considerable trouble. But schools cannot take on the responsibility for keeping certain children apart at school. Teachers are occasionally told, "I don't want my George sitting next to that Lumpkin boy! We have forbidden George to play with Larry on the school grounds," etc. Schools have a responsibility to help children extend relationships. Situations that violate a function of the school cause frustration for the school and the child. Asking the school to honor such requests may cause undue stress in developing a classroom setting favorable to learning.

Children's Behavioral Difficulties

It is much more difficult for parents to accept a child's behavioral difficulty than to accept academic difficulty. Principals and teachers find it more difficult, and more emotionally expensive, to resolve incidents of pupil behavioral problems — of discipline trouble — than any other kind of problem children have in school. The biggest reason for parents' difficulty in accepting that their child is misbehaving in school is this:

If a child is unmannerly, incorrigible, sullen, unkind, belligerent or uncooperative, or if he cheats, is untruthful or steals, the parents feel implicated.

When children have academic difficulties, parents want to rationalize, to direct the blame away from themselves and onto the child's lack of native ability, poor teachers and other causes which are not their fault.

But the behavior patterns of children seem to reflect directly and mercilessly upon the home and the parents. If a child is unmannerly, incorrigible, sullen, unkind, belligerent or uncooperative, or if he cheats, is untruthful or steals, the parents feel implicated. Their sins of omission or commission in child rearing have been discovered by the school!

When a child misbehaves, in spite of the fact that the parents have done wonderfully well in rearing that child, parents still feel disarmed and embarrassed.

For whatever assurance it may provide to parents when children have behavioral difficulty and become involved even in serious problems, the school does not judge you, the parent, or lash out against you. Teachers recognize that many variables influence child behavior.

The School's Standard of Pupil Behavior

In any school, there will be parents who believe the school's discipline is entirely too lax and permissive. There are sure to be, in that same school, parents who believe just the opposite — that the school is far too strict.

The school must function between two extremes of discipline — from that operating in the home where a parent's word is law and never to be questioned, where the punishment is quick and severe for any act of misbehavior, to the home in which parental discipline is so

lax or lacking that the children literally chastise the parents. The school attempts to maintain a degree of order and a standard of child behavior which seems to meet the needs of most pupils. The school sets its own standards, but not in disregard of the homes it serves or of values held by the community.

Parents must recognize that school discipline must be an *institutional discipline, developed and maintained differently from home and family discipline.* So the school demands or accepts a certain standard of behavior from its pupil body and from individual pupils.

It's also important to emphasize that different teachers hold children to different standards of discipline and behavior. Children need to shift gears constantly not only from home to school to home, but from classroom to classroom. They will need to adjust to many other behavior situations in places such as church, a picnic, a Scout meeting, and over at Aunt Ruth's. This shifting gears is good practice.

The school attempts to maintain a degree of order and a standard of child behavior which seems to meet the needs of most pupils.

It is a "must" for parents and teachers to work cooperatively in this matter of behavior and discipline, rather than in opposition to one another. Each may have to give a bit here or there for the child's good.

When any child has recurring behavioral situations at school, and when the school regularly reports instances of discipline trouble to the home, the following can almost always be said, in whole or in part:

1. The child *does* have a behavioral problem.
2. It is *not* the teacher's or school's fault.
3. The problem is *not* caused by other children.
4. No one is "picking" on your child.
5. He really did what the school reported he did.
6. He has been treated fairly.
7. He has already been given a second chance and a third . . . and a fourth.
8. His attitude toward rules, regulations and authority needs improvement.
9. The school has not "got it in for him."
10. Most likely he shows the same symptoms in the home, and the parents, too, have difficulty "making him behave."
11. His behavioral difficulties are showing up elsewhere — on the street, at play, etc.
12. The school was fair and did chastise the other offenders, too.
13. Finally, the school is earnestly trying to help your child by reporting the information to the parents — information which belongs rightfully to the parents.

VII. Summary

What Can Parents Do? What Should Parents Not Do?

Parents can and should go into action on *any* behavioral situation reported to them by the school. The child is *their* responsibility. They have far more rights and obligations to teach their children proper habits of conduct *than anyone else.*

It's the school's job to *support* and *help maintain* what the parents have already taught or are teaching. The school must cooperatively share the responsibility in assisting children to conduct their behavior within an acceptable societal framework. Parents and the school have coresponsibilities in helping children understand the ramifications of disruptive behavior. What can or what should parents do when their child has discipline problems?

1. Don't resign or abdicate your obligation of parenthood.
2. Don't excuse misbehavior. Parents should always defend their children when they have been falsely or wrongly accused. When children misbehave in school, or otherwise get into trouble, parents should stand by their children, help them, counsel them, and assist them to resolve and make amends for the wrong act. Helping, counseling and assisting children are actions different from excusing them or making excuses for them in order to avoid the real issue.
3. Don't excuse yourself or the situation. Children's behavioral problems are not solved, either, by parents excusing themselves or the situation. Some parents stubbornly refuse to deal with their children's problems.
4. Don't expect the problem to solve itself. One declaration often heard from parents is this: "Oh, he'll grow out of it." This statement has covered academic, physical, emotional and health situations. This would be a wonderful solution if it were valid. At best, it is only a gamble.

   Another disturbing excuse which is often heard is this: "He's always been like that." The implication is that the child's parents are accustomed to his problem and are convinced that the child will probably always have it. So why worry? We can blind ourselves to behavioral problems but they just won't go away.
5. Think about that second chance. The philosophy that "everyone deserves a second chance" is quite universal. When a mistake has been made, and is righted, another chance has been earned. However, some children's misinterpretation of that belief or misuse of the second-chance principle promotes their behavioral difficulties.

   They might harbor the belief that one automatically "goes free" on any first act of misbehavior. But we know that second chances beget third chances and deteriorate into fourth and fifth chances. Children come to believe that adults can be easily manipulated — that they are quite vulnerable. When we give children unearned additional chances, we foster in them a disregard for law and order and create negative attitudes toward behavioral limitations.
6. Avoid overprotecting a child. Obviously, some children are overprotected by their parents. Such children are seldom permitted, as a result of natural experimenting, to suffer a scratch or bump or to ride any rough water on the stream of life. Mom and Dad are great and inexhaustible sources of service — at the snap of a finger. Overprotected children are indeed underprivileged children.

VIII. Overorganized Children

Many children are overorganized. Even those pupils who do extremely well academically are very often overloaded with out-of-school activity. Parents want their children to be "well-rounded" — to avail themselves of all the wonderful opportunities which beckon them. They want their offspring to use their leisure time wisely, to become cultured, healthy, disciplined and socially skilled. Parents seem bent on exploiting both real and imagined talents of their children. So, parents over-organize their children and sign them up for Scouting, community clubs, Little League baseball and football or the country club swimming team. Parents insist on their children taking singing lessons, dancing lessons, instrumental music instruction, dramatic training, riding lessons or art courses. The list could go on and on.

All the foregoing activities are splendid. Each can make a worthwhile contribution to a child's character — to his personality, physical and mental health, and his general education. But error is in the amount of involvement parents permit or force their children to attempt.

Overorganization and Success in School

Overinvolvement of children in various out-of-school activities affects children's school progress and success. During the school months, the education of a child — his dedication to his schoolwork — must be given priority. His school endeavors must be his most important concern. Parents must guard jealously and tenaciously this first call upon a child's time, energy, attention and interest. They may jeopardize his chances of success if they let anything overshadow or take away from school activity or school time.

The child with excessive interests and responsibilities outside of school may easily have a difficult time *in* school. Even though he is being successful in school along with a burden of overorganization, his success could well be more marked and thorough if he devoted more of his time to his schoolwork.

Children sometimes equate school with any one of their outside activities; they give school no more than equal billing with all the rest. For example, a child takes piano and dancing lessons, belongs to Bluebirds, is taking swimming at the club — and goes to school. She may think all five of these activities are equal in importance, giving to her schoolwork at least no more devotion or attention than she gives to any of the others.

Make your motto "school first," and put all other activities beneath this, in whatever order of importance you and your child determine them to be.

Remember! The school should not have to beg parents for their children's time, attention, application to the job or expenditure of energy. The school should never be put into a bargaining position along with other agencies for your child. Make your motto "school first," and put all other activities beneath this, in whatever order of importance you and your child determine them to be.

Keeping in close contact with your child's teacher, especially during the fall months, will help you determine how many activities your child should take on. He may need to work some at home after school or early in the evening in order to 1) finish work he didn't complete at school, 2) do more of the same work to better understand a concept, fact or process and 3) do independent work for enrichment.

But whether or not he does schoolwork at home, remember that his mind and his body need to be refreshed and re-energized for a good day back at school on the next day. A relaxed evening of reading, family fun, watching television, a visit with a friend or popping corn for the family — such diversions may be far more beneficial than an evening devoted exclusively to organized activity.

VIII· Summary

How Parents Can Control Their Children's Extra Activities

Parents can maintain control of their children's extra activities and, thus, avoid later difficulty for their children in school, by:

1. Putting the child's school welfare first.
2. Adding to a child's program of activity only when he can handle it, only when all that he is already involved in is being handled ably and to your satisfaction.
3. Adding activities carefully, slowly, wisely, and after thorough evaluation.
4. Temper your own overzealousness for making your child's life a "rich" one through numerous activities. You may only impoverish him.
5. Determine that the child wants to become involved in the activity. Don't force him into it merely because you think he ought to be doing it.
6. Mark out some sacred free time for your youngster — *his* time, not to be encroached upon, nor taken from him.
7. Maintain some family activities. This is so very important. How tragic it is in so many homes today that the family breaks into fragmented activity each evening, or on weekends, the different members going off to or being involved in activities away from all other family members. Guard your family circle. Don't let the school reach its long arm into the home each night with so much homework that the child is grounded all evening, actually dictating that the family shall not have any time for fun and relaxation together. Parents need to control their own activities, too, lest they run out on the children night after night.
8. Whatever activity your children take part in, show an interest in it, encourage them, help them, go with them. Make it important.

Children like to be busy. They ought to be busy. But let us not overorganize them.

28

IX. Keep Up Your Courage!

Being a parent is a pretty difficult assignment. When you stop to think, parents have had very little training — perhaps no training at all — for one of the most complicated, exacting, delicate jobs on earth — rearing children. After all is said and done, most parents do a good job rearing their children.

It is a wonderful privilege and a serious obligation to help your children succeed in school. And toward this latter endeavor, understand that communication is at the very heart of it all.

X. Indiana Department of Public Instruction: Its Role in the Community

Within the state agency known as the Department of Public Instruction are 28 divisions. Each of these functions primarily to strengthen educational efforts throughout Indiana. There is, of course, interchange of ideas and materials with other states, for the Department does not exist in isolation.

Although direct contact with children is infrequent, the work done by the Department is ultimately in behalf of the 1,183,636 young people who populate Indiana schools. In order to carry out appropriate programs, divisions consist of consultants and specialists. These people are based either in Indianapolis offices or at centers within the state. From these bases Department personnel provide assistance to local schools in the development of their instructional programs. Hundreds of inservice workshops are conducted each year to keep Indiana educators informed about the latest methods and materials available for the improvement of learning. In addition, personnel are available for individual consultation upon request.

Divisions' operations cover a broad scope. A description of some of those having the most direct impact on citizens, educators and students may enable you, the parent, to better interpret the role of the Department of Public Instruction.

Adult Education

The Division of Adult and Community Education assists local school corporations as they address the educational and recreational needs of the entire community through a number of services. The community education section of the division provides to local schools and communities development and technical assistance in the areas of community needs assessment, problem solving and citizen participation. Financial and technical assistance are available for instructional programs in adult basic education.

Basic education includes reading, math, English and information on subjects such as occupational knowledge and consumer economics. The G.E.D. (General Education Development) testing program provides adults with the opportunity to receive a high school equivalency certificate. The division is responsible for the establishment of G.E.D. testing centers and the administration of the state G.E.D. testing program.

Finally, the Division administers reimbursement to local schools for adult high school credit classes and provides assistance in the establishment of credit programs.

Compensatory Education (Title I)

Title I of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act provides funds to school corporations for special educational activities designed for educationally deprived students. Educationally deprived students as defined by Title I are students who are functioning below their appropriate grade level. Financial assistance to school corporations is provided on the basis of the number of children within each district who come from low-income families. While not all low-income children are educationally deprived, the relationship between poverty and low achievement is well documented.

Title I legislation requires that educationally deprived students receive the benefits of Title I funding in addition to the benefits received by all other students. The major benefit received by Title I students is supplementary classroom instruction in basic academic subjects such as reading and math. When students have special needs which impede normal educational progress, they receive the benefits of supportive services. Health, medical, dental or psychological services may be provided to Title I students.

Because of many failure experiences in school, Title I students need new approaches to learning. Parents as well as teachers play an integral part in the planning, implementation and evaluation of Title I activities. Through Parent Advisory Councils, parent participation gives greater direction to Title I programs.

Division of Crisis Prevention

The Division of Crisis Prevention is a human resource unit that provides consultant assistance to school personnel, parents and students to deal effectively with school-related problems as identified by the school. The division

personnel have expertise in interpersonal communications, organizational and group development, interpersonal conflict resolution, and school law and law enforcement.

Consultants of the division are available to: assist groups in assessing needs, provide information on the legal aspects of school discipline, share innovative solutions which have been successful in other schools, and develop and train local people to meet identified needs.

Division of Curriculum

The Division of Curriculum offers specialized help in teaching mathematics, science, foreign language, environmental education, social studies, driver education, language arts, music, ethnic studies, elementary education and early childhood education. Consultants in these areas are available to help local schools in curriculum development and evaluation. They also advise state and local school officials on curriculum needs and programs.

New curriculum guides are developed in areas not covered by other divisions, and existing guides are continuously updated.

Through these efforts the Division strives to:

1. Provide consultative services to schools and state government,
2. Cooperate with other divisions and other departments of state government,
3. Develop guidelines and statements on curriculum emphasis and direction,
4. Plan state and regional conferences and workshops,
5. Apply statutes and regulations to local situations.

Division of Educational Information and Research

The Division of Educational Information and Research assists the Department of Public Instruction as a source of accurate information and data relevant to planning and management. In addition, EIR provides assistance to other divisions in the electronic scoring and analysis of tests and surveys.

Data maintained by EIR include:

1. Names and addresses of public school corporations, superintendents and board members.
2. Names and address of public and nonpublic schools.
3. Names, positions and other characteristics of public school certified employees (teachers, administrators and guidance, supervisory and auxiliary personnel).
4. Public and nonpublic school fall enrollment by grade, sex and race.
5. Enrollment by subject in grades 9-12.
6. Average daily attendance and membership.
7. Dropout statistics.
8. Some combinations of the above (e.g., student/teacher ratios).

Most of this information is published and available from the Division upon request.

Division of Equal Educational Opportunity

The Division of Equal Educational Opportunity (EEO) works with any local school district seeking technical assistance in developing and carrying out desegration plans or helping in the area of human relations. Another area of attention is Title IX which guarantees sex equality in education.

EEO works closely with the Division of Schoolhouse Planning in instances where a school district is proposing to build on a new site or undertaking major remodeling. The purpose is to assure that racial isolation does not exist and that the local district is in compliance with federal and state Equal Education Opportunity legislation and regulations.

The Division also helps local school districts create and promote educational practices which will facilitate harmonious inclusion of all students in an integration situation. The focus is upon continuation of a positive educational climate during any desegregation process.

To this end consultants — either state or national in orientation — and resource materials can be provided upon request. The purpose of such provisions is to help in planning curriculum and in making necessary organizational changes which may be required by law in an integrated situation. Further benefits relate to developing workshops for administrators and professional staffs.

Through this Division every effort is being made to assure opportunities for educational fulfillment to all Indiana students, removing any racial or sex discrimination practices.

Division of Innovative Education

ESEA Title IV, Part C, through this division, annually makes funds available to local schools

to enable those local education agencies (schools) to plan, develop, implement and evaluate new or innovative programs designed to reduce educational problems. Federal guidelines regulate the awarding and the use of such funds.

All local schools are eligible to apply through written proposals. Since there is a competitive element, the grants are made to those programs which, through considerable review, are deemed to have the best potential for success.

Consultants of the Division of Innovative Education are available to assist with:

- Guidelines and forms distributed to local education agencies
- Workshops each year for potential applicants
- Preparation of proposals in terms of content and format

Division of Instructional Media

As school libraries expand to include more than books — e.g., filmstrips, tape recorders, records, illustrative packets, transparencies — a new term has been given them. Today you will hear students and teachers talk about the school's "media center." Focal points of intensive learning activity, these centers frequently are assisted by the Division of Instructional Media. A staff of librarians, consultants and technicians provides a multitude of services for Indiana schools. Services include aid in developing media collections (print, audiovisual and equipment) in schools, help for teachers in utilization of media and administration of Title IV-B funds, a federal program that gives all schools money for acquisition of school library materials.

In addition, the Division maintains an extensive film library. Teachers may borrow from the collection free of charge — and do so with regularity.

A popular program sponsored by the Division is the Media Fair. This annual event enjoys wide participation of school-age youngsters. Entries for competition include videotapes, photography, films, slides/filmstrips, transparencies, audio recordings and multi-media (a combination of two or more visual images).

Considering the impact that media have on the education of today's children, the Division of Instructional Media plays a prominent role in Indiana's educational structure.

Division of Pupil Personnel Services

The Division of Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) administers programs in guidance and counseling, school psychological services, attendance/school social work, health services and career education. The Division provides professional assistance, consultation and leadership to the educational community to facilitate, improve and expand pupil personnel services at the local level. The Division responds to daily requests from local school personnel and parents for information and interpretation in the pupil personnel services area.

The Division endorses the philosophy that local pupil personnel staff should be concerned with both those children who are experiencing the normal problems of development and with those whose problems require a more intensive and specialized type of help. The PPS staff plays a significant role in creating a climate which has a positive influence on the child's development and which minimizes the likelihood of serious problems.

The staff also has a significant role in identifying potential problems so they can receive early attention. When children do have problems which require a specialized, individualized service not generally provided within the classroom setting, the PPS staff is a major source to all school personnel and to others who are concerned with the child and his difficulties.

Division of Reading Effectiveness

The Division of Reading Effectiveness was established to facilitate the developing emphasis on reading in Indiana. Its staff of reading consultants works with local schools to assess and strengthen their existing reading programs. The staff conducts a variety of teacher training sessions throughout the state to ensure that teachers have training in various methods of reading instruction. Consultants respond to invitations to work with individual schools and teachers who seek help.

One division facet that has particular appeal to youngsters is the familiar character "Readmore." Readmore is an appealing blue and green cat who — whether smiling from posters, pins and bookmarks or visiting in person — encourages youngsters to read (more) for fun and information.

Another program that results in direct contact with youngsters is a summer book program. A van equipped as a library visits Indianapolis parks. Visitors to the van may select a paperback book of their choice.

The Division follows a philosophy of reaching as many educators as possible. They, in turn, reach other teachers as well as students with positive influence. This is referred to as the *multiplier effect.* In this manner the Division is weaving a strong statewide network of people who are striving toward an improved climate for the teaching/learning of reading.

Division of School Food and Nutrition Programs

The Division of School Food and Nutrition Programs, in cooperation with USDA, administers federally funded Child Nutrition Programs. The overall goal of these programs is to assist in the elimination of hunger and malnutrition among Indiana's children and youth. The division disseminates and insures compliance with guidelines of the program. It also makes appropriate reimbursements.

The National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program are available to public schools, private schools and residential institutions. The National School Lunch Program provides a highly nutritious, low-cost meal to participating children, while the School Breakfast Program provides a nutritious breakfast at school. The amount charged to a child for breakfast and lunch is dependent upon the income and size of the family. However, the maximum charge for a lunch is $.55, and the maximum charge for breakfast is $.25.

The Child Care Food Program provides assistance for food service in public and nonprofit private institutions such as day care centers, family day care homes and group day care homes. The Summer Food Service Program is designed to improve the nutrition of children during the summer months through well balanced meals and supplements. Groups eligible for sponsorship of the Summer Food Service Program include city recreation departments, city health departments, community groups, public schools and residential camps.

The Division also provides, upon written request, information and nutrition education projects being conducted on an individual school basis. Members of the staff are available to speak to organizations upon written request. Additionally, the Division has developed a slide-tape presentation dealing with the School Breakfast Program which is available on loan for organization meetings.

Division of Schoolhouse Planning

The Division of Schoolhouse Planning is assigned limited investigative functions which are quite clearly and carefully spelled out. The purposes of investigations, or project reviews, have been to protect against extravagant expenditures, to suggest safer and/or more efficient facilities, to encourage alternatives that might be available in satisfactory housing, to point out duplication of effort and to avoid needless building. Investigations entail inspections and discussions with superintendents, boards of education and architects.

Certain review functions are performed by the Division of Schoolhouse Planning. One such function involves the educational space relationship in plans submitted for approval. Established procedure is for the local school superintendent and the architect to preview preliminary plans with the Division of Schoolhouse Planning so that suggested improvements may be made before final plans are drawn and necessary changes become costly. Experienced school personnel can often point out specific areas needing readjustment at the time of preliminary previewing.

The Division of Schoolhouse Planning does not duplicate efforts of other state agencies. While one agency is concerned with evaluation of structural material features of plans and the meeting of building codes, Schoolhouse Planning is concerned with the relationship of educational space, economy of construction and site selection in relation to the community and its needs.

Another state agency is concerned with the safety and sanitary features of a building; Schoolhouse Planning is also concerned with safety but with a focus on travel and traffic patterns. The fire marshall is concerned with floor plans as they relate to number of exits and extinguishers in adherence to fire codes. Schoolhouse Planning is concerned with the relative location of rooms to halls and stairways as shown on floor plans.

Energy conservation measures are another consideration of the division. Schoolhouse Planning frequently confers with other state agencies such as the Department of Natural Resources (flood plains), the State Road Commission (accessibility and traffic patterns),

and other divisions of the Department of Public Instruction. In short, the Division of Schoolhouse Planning serves the local education agencies in a consultant and advisory capacity in contrast with the strict enforcement of building codes.

Division of Special Education

The Division of Special Education was established under Chapter 276 of the Acts of 1947. The purposes of the Division are: (1) general supervision of all special education in Indiana schools and (2) the recommendation of rules and regulations governing the conduct of special education programs.

The Indiana Department of Public Instruction, Division of Special Education, has jurisdiction over all special education programs in the public schools of Indiana. The following programs for exceptional children are included: Multiply Handicapped, Hearing Impaired, Learning Disabled, Educable Mentally Retarded, Severely/Profoundly Mentally Retarded, Visually Handicapped, Emotionally Disturbed, Communication Handicapped, Trainable Mentally Retarded and Physically Handicapped.

To carry out the legally prescribed functions of various special education programs, the Division provides the following services:

1. Consultant services to all local school corporations in the establishment of new special education programs and the expansion and improvement of existing programs.
2. Individual approval of each special education program in local school corporations.
3. Workshops for teachers, therapists, administrators and school psychologists working in special education programs.
4. Cooperation with other agencies serving the handicapped.
5. Development and distribution of informational materials.
6. Participation in research activities and keeping local schools informed of research findings relevant to local special education programs.

Division of Vocational Education

More than 150,000 persons in Indiana pursue some type of vocational training. Nearly 100 different vocational programs are offered in the public schools, and the Division of Vocational Education has consultants in all of these areas to help local schools in the development and evaluation of their programs. These include the broad areas of business and office education, agriculture, distributive education, consumer and homemaking education, industrial education, health occupations, vocational guidance and vocational training for the handicapped and disadvantaged. The consultants also evaluate these programs to ensure their overall quality and eligibility for state and federal funding. Relevancy of programs is ensured by maintaining contact with business and industry.

The Division also has played a major role in the implementation of a plan for an area vocational education system in the public schools. Adopted in 1969-70, this system affects availability of secondary, post-secondary and adult vocational programs in local communities.

In cooperation with the Division of Pupil Personnel Services, the Division has developed a career education curriculum guide which is available to local schools.

Service to Indiana Citizens through the school is the principal goal of the State Superintendent and the Department of Public Instruction. You are invited to make written or telephone inquiries regarding your specific concerns. You are further invited to attend many of the workshops or other types of training conducted in your communities. More communication is desirable and encouraged.

We appreciate the support and involvement evident to date. For those who were heretofore unfamiliar with the Department and its operations, perhaps a mutually rewarding cooperation lies ahead.

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